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The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Letter dated 3 October 2003 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Israel, the occupying Power, continues to fervently pursue its illegal settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Yesterday, the Israeli Government publicized its intention to build another 600 settlement housing units in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. This intended action is part and parcel of the Israeli Government's expansionist designs throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in and around Occupied East Jerusalem, that have been effected, inter alia, by Israel's incessant settlement colonialism. In fact, the current expansion specifically concerns three illegal settlements to the south, east and north, respectively, of Occupied East Jerusalem.

Once again, the actions of the Israeli Government reveal its intransigent insistence on continuing with the colonization of the Palestinian land, in what clearly constitutes a war crime under international humanitarian law. Further, the occupying Power's actions in this regard, including the continuing confiscation of Palestinian land, the building and expansion of settlements and the building of bypass roads for the illegal settlers, portend the demise of the two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as they seriously threaten the existence of the State of Palestine on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

This latest Israeli decision to continue its illegal settlement activities must be viewed in the same context as the continued building of the expansionist conquest

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wall on Palestinian land. We reiterate our call upon the international community, in particular the Security Council, to take a firm and principled stand against such policies and practices by Israel, the occupying Power. Moreover, the Security Council should take urgent action to compel Israel to cease its illegal and destructive colonization of the Palestinian land and to abandon its expansionist designs in favour of compliance with international law, including international humanitarian law, and a peaceful and just resolution of this tragic conflict.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 37, 38, 84 and 103 of the fifty-eighth session, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dr. Nasser **Al-Kidwa**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations